

debate on the bill that he was responsible for.

It has been a great pleasure. It gives me an added sentimental value to this occasion.

I think most of you know that I have a special relationship with the page program that stems from the fact that I started as a page. Albeit as some of you know it was over on that other side in that other body over there, but you will forgive me for that. At that time it was really run as one single program.

I have to say that the page experience, as you can probably tell from where I am standing today, is one of those things, those experiences that had a profound change on my life. But having started here as a page, I promised Peggy and Miss Ivester and the others that I would not tell you all the stories about the things that I did, that we did as a page. So I promised not to tell you the story about how we hauled the English teacher's Volkswagon bug up the steps of the Library of Congress and planted it in the middle of the platform up there. And I promised not to tell you about the story of how we faked the suicide of one of the pages jumping from the balcony and there was a page spread out down below.

Mr. SHIMKUS. If the gentleman would yield, you would not have survived my mentorship as the chairman of the page board.

Mr. KOLBE. There was no question that almost all of us in the page program would not have survived the mentorship.

I promised not to tell you those kinds of things. Fortunately, it is on your last day anyhow, so you are probably not going to find time to do too many of those things today.

The gentleman from Illinois was talking about the celebrity sightings. Some people would think there are celebrities enough here in the House of Representatives and in the Senate and with all the joint sessions that we have. But I remember not too long ago when I had that actor. What's his name? Oh, Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie down in my office down below here on the first floor just below the Chamber here.

□ 1500

When I finished the meeting and came out, there were a bunch of secretaries and few pages there with their cameras, and I thought, wonderful, they want pictures of me. But no, none of them were interested at all in having a picture with me. It was this actor and actress that were there.

So I guess we know that really Members of Congress are pretty second-rate when it comes to celebrity sightings, and sometimes maybe we are just a little bit of chopped liver.

But I do want to say to you that this experience obviously is one that you may not realize it now, but you are going to carry away with you some very important things, some things

that will change your life in ways that you probably cannot even imagine right now.

It does not mean that all of you are going into politics, because probably only a handful of you might. As a matter of fact, in my graduating class at the page school, we went all the way through high school in those days. In my graduating class, I am the only one that ultimately stayed in elective politics.

But there, it does not matter. This experience will make a difference to you. It will make a difference not only in your school and make a difference not only in the way you look on things and events in the world, but hopefully will make you more of a citizen of the world and a citizen of the United States, and I think this is the important thing.

Many people ask us why do we continue this program. Let us face it. We could do this a lot easier with a lot less expense if we just contracted out and hired some people to serve as messengers, but year after year, the Congress of the United States supports this program for young men and women, and through the course of the more than 150, or really almost 200 years, several thousand young men and women like you have come through this program and had this experience because we think it makes a difference, and we think that your experience becomes the experience of the future leaders of the United States.

So I hope that whatever you do when you go back, you will think about this program, and, of course, you will think about your friends, the friendships you have made here and you will maintain those friendships and you will come back for your reunions. You always come back for the first year reunion, 5-year reunion, 10-year reunion. It is wonderful to have these friendships, but you will also remember what you learned here and you will incorporate into your daily lives and into the thinking of whatever you do, if you are in business, if you become a physician, if you become a lawyer, if you become a teacher. All of these things will be valuable to you.

So you have had a rare, rare experience, and I hope that you can appreciate that. But I want to say now in closing how much we appreciate what you do. You make our lives just a little bit easier every day. You are the grease that makes the wheel go round without squeaking quite so much, and sometimes we take it for granted and we do not realize how much of a difference that you make in our lives and the work of this body.

So it is my great privilege to be here to say thank you to you for the wonderful job that you have done for us, and I hope that I will see many of you in the years ahead, that we will stay in touch and I will follow your career, your successful careers in business, but most important, in your lives with your families and with the people that

you interact with. God bless you all and God bless America.

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for his comments, and every time JIM KOLBE speaks, as you have heard in the last comments at the end of the appropriation bill, the Foreign Ops bill in which Members from both sides, especially the Democrats, talked about his integrity, his commitment, his honesty, and those are comments from the heart, and you will get to hear him one more time at the graduation ceremony.

I bring you thanks from all the folks who you have worked with, the dorm staff, the school staff and of course, the floor staff here who are always well represented in keeping track of where you are.

Thank you for keeping track of each other during this time. Thank you for keeping each other safe and being friends to those who needed friends at that time, and thanks for keeping each other out of trouble. Those things that you have learned during this time, let us hope that you carry them on with you, that you will just make this world a better place.

So thank you. God bless you, and God bless the United States of America. We appreciate your service.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MCHENRY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. MCHENRY addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

HONORING CONSTABLE DALE GEDDIE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor today with a heavy heart. A constituent of mine, Smith County Constable Dale Geddies, was shot to death in Smith County and Deputy Daniel Leon was injured Wednesday morning as they responded to a domestic disturbance dispute call just outside Tyler, Texas.

Tyler deputies called for backup that morning, and Dale responded the same way he had his whole life, by getting to the scene as quickly as possible, without regard for his personal safety or what might be waiting for him at the scene.

Having known Constable Geddies well and understanding what a crucial role he played in his community, it is understandable, Mr. Speaker, that the